

RESOLUTION 19-238
Testimony

MISC. COM. 383

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Testimony of
Pacific Resource Partnership

City & County of Honolulu
Committee on Zoning, Planning and Housing
City Council Chamber
Councilmember Ron Menor, Chair
Councilmember Tommy Waters, Vice Chair

Resolution 19-238—Approving the Ala Moana Neighborhood Transit-Oriented Development Plan
Thursday, June 18, 2020

Aloha Chair Menor, Vice Chair Waters and Members of the Committee:

Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) provides comments on Resolution 19-238, which approves the Ala Moana Neighborhood Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan.

The Ala Moana Neighborhood TOD Plan provides a long-term vision for the Ala Moana Center rail transit station area—supporting the development of an equitable transit-oriented community where housing, including affordable/workforce housing, commercial/retail, and community services will be facilitated by a robust multimodal transportation network comprised of public and private modes. The City and County of Honolulu needs to create more housing opportunities, especially affordable/workforce housing, for Oahu's residents. According to the 2019 Hawaii Housing Planning Study, the City and County of Honolulu needs 22,168 new homes over the next five years (2020-2025) to satisfy its housing demand. As of 2017, the Census estimated that 39% of resident homeowners and 58% of renters in the City and County of Honolulu paid 30% or more of their income for housing. The building of a transit-oriented community in the Ala Moana neighborhood will help to address the County's unmet housing demand.

Moreover, PRP supports amendments to the Ala Moana Neighborhood TOD Plan encouraging the landowner of the Ala Moana Center to work with the City to assure a route for the future extension of the rail system to the University of Hawaii at Manoa. An extension to the University of Hawaii at Manoa will enhance the overall rail system by linking this important community resource and community to other TOD neighborhoods.

Lastly, PRP opposes language regarding parking standards on Page 11, Item No. 39 on the Amendment Form dated June 9, 2020 recommending that residential and some commercial uses consider unbundling parking to encourage the use of alternative transportation modes. We have concerns regarding the economic feasibility and marketability of unbundling of parking requirements, which has also been a topic of concern raised by industry stakeholders in Bill 2 (2020)—LUO Amendment Relating to Off-Street Parking and Loading. More specifically, we are concerned that an unbundling of parking requirements



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might severely impact the sales of much needed housing units. Moreover, an unintended consequence of such a requirement may result in on-street parking problems in surrounding neighborhoods.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.



Eric W. Gill, Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Gemma G. Weinstein, President

Godfrey Maeshiro, Senior Vice President

June 17, 2020

Committee on Zoning, Planning & Housing
Honolulu City Council

Testimony with comments on Resolution 19-238 regarding the Ala Moana TOD Plan

Chair Menor, Vice Chair Waters and members of the Committee:

UNITE HERE Local 5 represents hotel, health care and food service workers across the state; many live in the Ala Moana/Kaka'ako area; many more struggle to find affordable places where they and their families can live. Local 5 has for some time been concerned about the proliferation of condotels and hotels along the Kapiolani corridor, and about the need for housing that is truly affordable. Given the extent of the housing crisis in Hawaii, we have been encouraged by the passage over the past few years of affordable housing standards for development projects. Even with those changes, we believe more community discussion needs to happen before additional lodging developments are approved in the Ala Moana TOD area. There are several reasons why this is justified:

- We are seeing existing local businesses closed and destroyed to make way for several of the projects approved in recent years; it will take several more years until some of those projects are complete; and longer still until we know whether or not they are viable as lodging products. We also don't know how the addition of hotels in the Kapiolani/Kaka'ako area will impact existing businesses in Waikiki - both hotels and all other tourism-related businesses.
- The Draft Ala Moana TOD plan calls for up to 400,000 square feet of hotel use.¹ There has already been approved over one million square feet of hotel use in the area.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed Hawaii's need to diversify our economy. Prior to and during the last few months of the pandemic, the question of how much tourism is too much has been raised again and again in some form. Alongside that is the question: At what point are the costs of growing the number of tourists to Hawaii greater than the benefits? It is time to start demanding more for our communities in return for allowing this industry to grow further.

As such, we feel the move in some draft amendments to the Ala Moana TOD plan to limit future hotel development to the Convention Center subdistrict is a good idea; but we do not support the expansion of this subdistrict area beyond what the 2016 Draft Ala Moana TOD plan proposes. Council should retain as much discretionary power as possible in these matters so it can ensure that developers' projects have the kind of affordable housing outlays and other benefits the community needs as the area continues to evolve.

We support the idea of finalizing the Ala Moana TOD plan before approving further major developments of any kind in the area. We do, however, believe that as the landscape has changed over the past few years and as it will continue to change based on already-approved developments, Council should take additional time to solicit community input (especially as it is more difficult in the current circumstances). We would look forward to additional discussion before this committee moves forward with finalizing the plan.

Thank you.

¹ Ala Moana Neighborhood Transit Oriented Development Plan, April 2016, pg. 38, Figure 3-2.

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 1:41 PM
Subject: Zoning, Planning and Housing Speaker Registration/Testimony

Speaker Registration/Testimony

Name	Bryan Mick
Phone	8082853186
Email	micknb11@gmail.com
Meeting Date	07-18-2020
Council/PH Committee	Zoning
Agenda Item	Res 19-238
Your position on the matter	Oppose
Representing	Self
Organization	
Do you wish to speak at the hearing?	No
Written Testimony	
Testimony Attachment	
Accept Terms and Agreement	1

IP: 192.168.200.67

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 5:08 PM
Subject: Zoning, Planning and Housing Speaker Registration/Testimony

Speaker Registration/Testimony

Name	Sheldon K Glassco
Phone	8083725964
Email	sglassco@cbi-hawaii.com
Meeting Date	06-18-2020
Council/PH Committee	Zoning
Agenda Item	19-238 Amendments to Draft Ala Moana TOD Plan
Your position on the matter	Support
Representing	Self
Organization	
Do you wish to speak at the hearing?	Yes
Written Testimony	
Testimony Attachment	
Accept Terms and Agreement	1

IP: 192.168.200.67

From: CLK Council Info
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 10:25 AM
Subject: Zoning, Planning and Housing Speaker Registration/Testimony

Speaker Registration/Testimony

Name Sharlene Chun-Lum
Phone 8083542434
Email Sharstocks@yahoo.com
Meeting Date 06-18-2020
Council/PH Committee Zoning
Agenda Item Tes19-238
Your position on the matter Oppose
Representing Self
Organization
Do you wish to speak at the hearing? No
Written Testimony Many of the amendments reflect good consideration of people's concerns but the 400 ft building allowance for development at Ala Moana center is still unacceptable.
Testimony Attachment
Accept Terms and Agreement 1

IP: 192.168.200.67